



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

II. — *The Tradition of Caesar's Gallic Wars from Cicero to Orosius.*

BY E. G. SIHLER, PH.D.,

NEW YORK CITY.

THE period of the dissolution of the Roman Republic is marked by the preservation of the memoirs of the man who most effectively hastened that dissolution. Caesar's Commentaries are the only survival of that type of literature, neither the memoirs of Sulla nor those of Cicero having been preserved. Unhappily, the bulk of work concerning this writer is done for boys, although, as one of the most eminent Caesar critics (I. H. Heller of Berlin) of our time has truly said, "of all writers, this one has written most exclusively for men."

In the vast literature concerning Caesar an exhaustive discussion of the tradition of his narrative in other and later classical writers seems as yet to have been lacking. Rüstow and Köchly, it is true, when adverting to certain topics and passages in Caesar, have cited statements in Plutarch and Orosius. Nipperdey has edited I. 54, 1, after the same writers, rejecting the manuscripts of Caesar, and Drumann has adopted a certain view, adopted by Florus and others, as his own. An acute paper which touches upon this subject is that by Eyssenhardt (*Bemerkungen zu der Frage über die Glaubwürdigkeit von Caesar's Commentarien*. Jahns Jhbb. 1862, pp. 755-764), who notes with great care points of divergence between Caesar on the one hand, and Dio Cassius, Appian, Plutarch, etc., on the other. Eyssenhardt suggests that there was bitterness in the mind of Asinius Pollio because Caesar (in the *Bellum Civile*) had omitted adequate mention of Pollio's services. Later, in 1878, Georg Thouret wrote *De Cicerone, Asinio Pollione, C. Oppio rerum Caesarianarum Scriptoribus* (Leipziger Studien zur class. Philologie, 1878, pp. 305-360). Thouret says, in a sweeping manner (p. 330),

that there was nothing concerning the Gallic war in Livy, Suetonius, Florus, Eutropius, Plutarch, Appian, Dio Cassius, "which had not sprung from the same source, and sprung from the same roots." We will see that this is by no means accurate. A paper by H. Rauchenstein, concerning Caesar's campaign against the Helvetii, is reviewed by Heller in the *Philol. Anzeiger*, 1884, p. 307. It seems that Rauchenstein lays excessive stress upon divergence of statement between Caesar on the one hand, and Plutarch, Appian, Orosius, on the other. But so little balanced is he that he calls Caesar's account of the taking of the bulwark of carts (B. G. I. 26, 4) "Eine muthmassliche Fiction."

In taking up the notices and accounts concerning the Gallic war in chronological order, we will have to observe three points: (1) The manner of reproduction. (2) Whether anywhere a real addition may be observed. (3) What there may be of critical bias or purpose. It is hardly necessary to say in advance that none of the accounts, in point of fidelity and precision, can be compared to the accounts of such modern writers as Merivale or Mommsen, or of Ranke in his last great work; although we must keep in mind that in the accuracy of our geographical knowledge we have a very considerable advantage over the ancient readers of Caesar.

1. Cicero's notices, as far as available, are those of a contemporary. Thus we learn from a letter to Atticus (Ep. Att. II. 18, 3), written in June, 59 B.C., and again from one written a month later, that Caesar had invited Cicero to accompany him to Gaul as *legatus*. We also see (*e.g.* ad Fam. III. 5) that young gentlemen of rank, after Cicero's return from exile, sought letters from Cicero to Caesar so as to obtain military tribunates, and that their chief concern was to fill their pockets or to gain the notice of Caesar for future political advancement. Jests about the charioteers of the Britains are met with, *e.g.* Fam. VII. 6, to Trebatius: "In Britannia ne ab essedariis decipiaris caveto." Another passage shows one way in which people in the capital viewed Caesar's expedition to Britain, Fam. VII. 7: "In Britannia nihil esse audio neque auri neque argenti: id si ita est, essedum aliquod

capias suadeo et ad nos quam primum recurras" (May, 54 B.C.), and (Ep. Att. IV. 16, 7): "Etiam illud jam cognitum est, neque argenti scripulum esse ullum in illa insula, neque ullam spem praedae nisi ex mancipiis." In August of the same year Cicero congratulates his brother Quintus on the rare subject-matter for a new book afforded the latter by the expedition to Britain (ad Quint. Fratr. II. 15): "Te vero ὑπόθεσιν scribendi egregiam habere video: quos tu situs, quas naturas rerum et locorum, quas mores, quas gentis, quas pugnas, quem vero ipsum imperatorem habes!"

The result of the entire undertaking against Britain is well expressed (Q. Fr. III. 1, 10): "De Britannicis rebus cognovi ex tuis litteris nihil esse res quod gaudeamus nec quod metuamus." And to Att. IV. 18, 5: "A Quinto fratre et a Caesare a. d. VIII Kal. Nov. litteras datas a litoribus Britanniae proximo a. d. VI Kal. Octobr., confecta Britannia, obsidibus acceptis, nulla praeda, imperata tamen pecunia, exercitum e Britannia reportabant."

The younger Cicero in the field beguiled his time with writing Greek tragedies, *e.g.* Erigonia (cf. III. 5, 7). A letter from Britain reached Rome in a little more or less than a month (cf. ad Q. Fr. III. 1, 13; III. 1, 25). The ignorance or indifference prevailing at the capital as to geography is well illustrated by a passage in a letter dated Nov., 54. Marcus Cicero wishes to know whether he should give his letters addressed to Quintus to the couriers (*tabellarii*) of Caesar or to those of Labienus: "Ubi enim isti Nervii et quam longe absint, nescio." (Cf. B. G. V. 24, 2.)

After 54 B.C. there is an intermission in Cicero's letters of suggestive or important notices, down to 51 B.C.; not one word as to the great struggle of Vercingetorix. This hurricane Caesar had safely weathered, and was engaged in meeting several later and minor squalls in different parts of Gaul. The breach between the two surviving triumvirs had become an accomplished fact, and Cicero had become more definitely reattached to the party of the Optimates. His news about Caesar may have been somewhat colored by the filter through which it reached Cicero. Thus ad Fam. VIII. 1: "Quod ad

Caesarem, crebri et non belli de eo rumores, sed susurratores dumtaxat, veniunt; alius equitem perdidisse, quod, opinor, certe fictum est; alius, septimam legionem vapulasse, ipsum apud Bellovacos circumsederi interclusum ab reliquo exercitu."

2. Livy gave an account of Caesar's Gallic wars in books CIII. to CVIII., of which we have but the *Periochae*. In the *Periocha* of CIII., speaking of the Helvetians, he says, "quae (scil. gens) sedem quaerens per provinciam Caesaris Narbonem iter facere volebat." But it would require some violence to have Livy gather from Caesar that the Helvetii wished to go to Narbo, whereas their goal, the district of the Santones, was at least 200 miles away. *Narbonensem*, for *Narbonem* restores the sense, that being the official name of that province in Livy's time.

The losses of the Nervii are told with a slight inaccuracy, *Periocha* of book CIV., "donec ex sexaginta milibus armorum mille superessent" (Caesar, B. G. II. 28, 2, "ex hominum milibus LX ad vix quingentos qui arma ferre possent, sese redactos esse"). The *Periocha* of book CVI. begins: "Gallorum aliquot populi Ambiorige duce rege Eburonum defecerunt"; Hertz unnecessarily brackets *rege*, which is both historically correct and grammatically necessary.

As for Velleius Paterculus, the generalities of his text need not here be noticed by us.

3. Frontinus, author of the "Strategemata," wrote his work during the reign of Domitian, 81-96 A.D., because he always refers to the latter as "Imperator Fl. Domitianus Augustus Germanicus," with pretty strong praise of his wisdom and ingenuity in military matters. Frontinus' illustrations of military art drawn from Caesar's Gallic wars are easily identified, and are substantially faithful to the original. They are found in II. 3, 18; III. 7, 2; 17, 6, and 7; I. 11, 3; II. 1, 16; II. 5, 20. One reference I am unable to place, II. 6, 3: "C. Caesar Germanos inclusos et ex desperatione fortius pugnastes emitti jussit, fugientesque aggressus est."

4. As for Plutarch, it would be unfair indeed to expect perfect historical accuracy from that illustrator of human

character and champion of all the virtues. We do find gross slips, *e.g.* in his life of Caesar, c. 18, where he says that the Helvetians amounted to 300,000, of whom 190,000 were fighting men. (Caesar, B. G. I. 29: 368,000, of whom 92,000 bore arms.) As for women and children defending themselves from the bulwark of carts, Caesar has nothing about it.

The campaign against Ariovistus is given in c. 19. There are two data there not derivable from the account of Caesar or from the extant manuscripts. Caesar himself (I. 53, 2, 3) says that with the exception of a handful (*perpauci*) the Germans were overtaken by Caesar's cavalry and slain. But Plut. Caes. 19: ἀριθμὸν δὲ νεκρῶν μυριάδας ὀκτὼ γενέσθαι λέγουσι. The other point is the statement of Plutarch in the same chapter that Caesar pursued the Germans for four hundred stadia to the Rhine, which is equivalent to *quingquaginta*, but not to *quinque* milia passuum, the latter being the reading of Caesar's manuscripts. A gross inaccuracy is found in Plutarch's statement that there were not less than 170,000 fighting men cooped up by Caesar in Alesia, whereas the latter gives 80,000 (B. G. VII. 71, 3). Elsewhere, too, we detect slovenliness of reminiscence in Plutarch, as when he calls the Usipetes and Tencteri of Caesar's text Οὐσίπαι and Τενκερίται. The famous motion of Cato to surrender Caesar to these tribes in atonement for his perfidy is quoted by Plutarch from Tanusius (Geminus), a contemporary historian (cf. Peter, *Fragmenta Historicorum Romanorum*). A proof that Caesar suffered from reverses in the campaign against the Arverni in 52 B.C. (Book VII.) καὶ δεικνύουσι Ἀρβέρνοι ξιφίδιον πρὸς ἱερῷ κρεμάμενον, ὡς δὲ Καίσαρος λάφυρον· ὁ θεασάμενος αὐτὸς ὕστερον ἐμειδίασε καὶ τῶν φίλων καθελεῖν κελευόντων οὐκ εἶασεν, ἱερὸν ἡγούμενος. This, too, is derived from some other source. And again, the surrender of Vercingetorix before Alesia is told by Plutarch with a certain detail greatly exceeding Caesar's extraordinary compression (VII. 89, 4: "Vercingetorix deditur"), ἀναλαβὼν τῶν ὅπλων τὰ κάλλιστα καὶ κοσμήσας τὸν ἵππον ἐξιππάσατο διὰ τῶν πυλῶν καὶ κύκλῳ περὶ τὸν Καίσαρα καθεζόμενον ἐλάσας, εἶτα ἀφαλάμενος τοῦ ἵππου τὴν μὲν πανοπλίαν ἀπέριψεν κτέ.

5. Suetonius, a contemporary of Hadrian, and at one time imperial secretary, composed his *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* about 120 A.D. The work of this important writer is justly famous, not only for notices of the most accurate detail drawn from the most reliable and original sources, but also on account of the absence of panegyric exaggeration. Whatever bias there may be in Suetonius' Caesar, it is not favorable. To illustrate: Acute study of the *Commentaries* has revealed the fact that Caesar, with consummate skill, has presented his conquest as a series of unavoidable acts, partly defensive and partly precautionary in character. But on this score Suetonius speaks with great bluntness (c. 24): "nec deinde ulla belli occasione ne injusti quidem ac periculosi abstinuit, tam foederatis quam infestis ac feris gentibus ultro lacescit, adeo ut senatus quondam legatos ad explorandum statum Galliarum mittendos decreverit ac nonnulli (Cato scil.) tradendum eum hostibus censuerint. Sed, prospere decedentibus rebus, et saepius et plurimum quam quisquam unquam dierum supplicationes impetravit." A notice of supplementary character refers to the enlistment of a regular legion in Further Gaul. (Caesar, B. G. I. 7, 2: "Provinciae toti quam maximum potuit militum munerum imperat.") Suet. 24: "(legio una) conscripta ex Transalpinis vocabulo quoque Gallico — Alauda enim appellabatur — quam disciplina cultuque Romano institutam et ornatum postea universam civitate donavit." The amount of annual tribute levied upon Gaul by Caesar was given by Plutarch in his *Caesar*, 25, but is lost in the manuscript. In Suet. 54: "In Gallia fana templa deum donis referta expilavit, urbes diripuit saepius ob praedam quam ob delictum." This, too, suggests a contemporary writer of Caesar's time bitterly hostile to him.

The criticism on Caesar's *style*, uttered by Asinius Pollio, we may here pass by; but Suetonius adds the following judgment of Pollio as to the *Commentarii*: "parum diligenter parumque integra veritate compositos putat." This judgment on its face appears as summarized by Suetonius. He derived it probably from the *Historiae* of Pollio, that famous, and, as Horace (*Carm.* II. 1) calls it, risky account of the

civil war, which, however, takes as its starting-point, not 49 B.C., but 60 B.C., the year in which the first Triumvirate was formed. The inference of Teuffel, therefore, is as sound as it is obvious, viz., that Pollio treated his subject pragmatically rather than in the annalistic fashion, and that he could scarcely forego treating of the Gallic war in the same fashion.

On the other hand, we know very definitely that a young partisan and ardent admirer of Caesar, Gaius Oppius, wrote a book dealing largely with the splendid and generous qualities of his patron; for example, relating a case of delicate self-sacrifice shown to this Oppius himself when the latter was ailing, told both by Plutarch (c. 17) and by Suetonius (c. 72). From Oppius, too, is derived Plutarch's statement (c. 17) that in that war (*i.e.* the Gallic) Caesar practised dictating letters to two amanuenses at the same time; ὡς δὲ Ὀππιὸς φησι, καὶ πλείουςιν. It seems a reasonable inference that kindred detail should be traced to Oppius likewise, *e.g.* about the sword of Caesar kept by the Arverni, the detailed narrative of Vercingetorix' surrender, to which we may advert further on. From the same source perhaps was derived the following in Suetonius, c. 58: "Obsessione castrorum in Germania (*i.e.* in the country of the Nervii, B. G. V.) nuntiata per stationes hostium Gallico habitu penetravit ad suos."

Whether the following is of the same origin I do not dare to conjecture; it seems intrinsically improbable (Suet. 67): "Diligebat quoque (scil. milites suos) usque adeo ut audita clade Tituriana barbam capillumque summiserit nec ante dempserit quam vindicasset."

6. Julius Florus' Epitome of Livy was written about 200 years after the era of Augustus. This writer gives the most worthless reproduction of all, allowing his rhetorical pen to run away with him. Thus he says of the ships of the Veneti (I. 45, 5): "rudes et informes et statim naufragae cum rostra sensissent" — whereas Caesar had distinctly stated that the Venetian ships were invulnerable, as far as ramming by Roman prows was concerned (III. 13, 8). Equally slovenly is the reference to the Aquitani: "Aquitani, callidum genus,

in speluncas se recipiebant"; which blunder may have risen from a confused recollection of the *mines*, in the construction of which the Aquitani were experts (B. G. III. 21, 3). It is curious that so careless a writer, who even goes so far as to confound Gergovia with Alesia (§ 23), should have been quoted by Goeler as an authority on the campaign against the Usipetes and Tencteri, where he (Florus) substitutes Mossella for Mosa. The reckless bravery of some Roman legionaries in their attack upon the phalanx of Ariovistus is curiously exaggerated by Florus. Parallel citation will here be instructive:—

Caesar, B. G. I. 52, 5: "Reperti sunt complures nostri, qui in phalanges insilirent et scuta manibus revellerent, et desuper vulnerarent."

Flor. I. 45, 13: "Elatis super caput scutis cum se testudine barbarus tegeret, super ipsa Romani scuta salierunt, et inde in jugulos gladii descendebant."

Here, probably, Florus and other readers actually seem to have taken *insilire in phalanges* as "jumping upon"; and it is possible that "*et desuper vulnerarent*" in Caesar's text is a complement of Caesar's narrative added by some reader who derived that curious meaning from the words. We may therefore possibly be justified in bracketing these words with Dittenberger.

In the winter of 54–53 B.C. Labienus succeeded in encompassing the death of the Treverian chief Indutiomarus, who had been keeping his people in chronic revolt. Labienus accomplished his object by ordering that in a general sally all should attack Indutiomarus. (B. G. V. 58, 4–5.) Speaking of Indutiomarus and Ambiorix together, Florus writes thus: "Sed ille (Indutiomarus) fortiter a *Dolabella* summotus est, hic (Amb.) insidiis in valle dispositis dolo *perculit*." Evidently the rhetorician here again has contrived an antithesis. Perhaps some change like the following will restore the original text: Sed ille fortiter <pugnans?> dolo *Labieni bello* summotus est, hic insidiis in valle dispositis dolo <suo?> *perrupit*.

7. Appian's account of the Gallic war has reached us in the shape of a fragmentary abstract. The only notable dictum

in it is a confirmation of Plutarch's account (c. 22) of Cato's motion to surrender Caesar to the Usipetes and Tencteri for his perfidy: Appianus, ἐκ τῆς Κελτικῆς; 28, Κάτωνά τε ἐν 'Ρώμῃ τῶν τις συγγραφέων φησὶ γνώμην ἐσενεγκεῖν ἐκδοῦναι τοῖς βαρβάροις τὸν Καίσαρα ὡς ἐναγὲς ἔργον ἐς διαπρεσβευσάμενους ἐργασάμενον.

8. Dio Cassius' reproduction is characteristic of that historian. Palpable indeed are his good faith, his painstaking reading, his scrupulous accuracy in many details; but these virtues are marred; his interpolation of long speeches which, although they are intended to be imitations of the great Thucydides, are purely the manufacture of Dio both in composition and argument. Dio's account of the Gallic wars of Caesar is found to form a great part of his work from 38, 31, to 40, 41. As the occasion for inserting one of his long-winded rhetorical performances, Dio chose the famous speech by which Caesar (I. 40) put an end to the panicky feeling of his men before moving upon Ariovistus. Here two reminiscences of Thucydides occur in phrases and terms of speech (38, 44, 4; 47, 4; cf. also 39, 50, 3; 40, 1, 2). There are of course many slips in detail, as when Ariovistus (38, 43) is called an Allobrogian. The Germans throughout are called Κέλται. The battle with Ariovistus is told with spirited detail, probably mostly drawn, however, from the sympathetic imagination of the historian. As regards the *insilire in phalanges*, Dio too seems to have conceived it like Florus: ἀνήλυντο τρόπον τινὰ καὶ ἔκοπτον αὐτούς.

It is an inaccurate statement, or at least one at variance with Caesar's own account, when Dio says (39, 1, 2) that before 57 B.C. a part of the Belgae were in treaty relations with Rome. Dio's reminiscence of B. G. II. 7, 1, is confused when he says that Caesar sent his light-armed troops and cavalry by night to guard the bridge over the Axona (it should be the oppidum of Bibrax).

The most arbitrary performance is the sketch of the naval battle with the Veneti (Dio, 39, 42 sq.), in which but slight regard is paid to the clear and precise narrative of Caesar. It seems indeed that whereas some of the finest pieces of writing

in Thucydides had been descriptions of naval battles, as those of Phormio near Naupactus, or of the Corcyraeans and Corinthians, or of the Athenians and Syracusans, the peculiar ambition of Dio impelled him to elaborate something in that line. And Dio is not merely independent of Caesar, but his description is positively incongruous with Caesar's. Caesar, for example, presents the device of the scythes for cutting down the halyards as the one thing which overcame the advantages of the Celtic fleet. Dio brings in the scythes as a subsidiary contrivance, applied near the end when the contest was virtually decided. Caesar says that the hulls of the Venetian ships were invulnerable to any ramming by Roman beaks. According to Dio, many of the Gallic ships were run to the bottom, etc.

Caesar's first five books are set forth in pretty even proportion; but books VI.–VII. are given more summarily by Dio, who evidently is wearying of his task. His reproduction palpably tapers off, and this too when a more acute reading of his author must have told him that the campaign of 52 B.C. and the rising of Vercingetorix were the most critical parts of the whole series of events, as they are the most stirring portion of the narrative. The surrender of Vercingetorix (Dio, 40, 41), it is true, forms an exception. He could have escaped (not according to Caesar — Mommsen, too, adopts Dio's version), but preferred surrendering his person. The personal appearance and the demeanor of Vercingetorix are again described with a detail which is not derivable from Caesar's bald two words, *Vercingetorix deditur* (VII. 89, 4).

It is more than probable that Oppius was the common source for the various relators of this episode. When Caesar sent a letter to Quintus Cicero in the latter's most critical stage of siege at the hands of the Nervii, he used Greek letters (V. 48, 4), and Dio adds the remark (40, 9, 3): *είώθει δὲ καὶ ἄλλως, ὅποτε τε δι' ἀπορρήτων τινὶ ἐπέστελλε, τὸ τέταρτον ἀεὶ στοιχείου ἀντὶ τοῦ καθήκουτος ἀντεγγράφειν, ὅπως ἂν ἀγνωστα τοῖς πολλοῖς ἢ τὰ γράφόμενα.*

9. The last of our authors is Paulus Orosius, a younger contemporary and protégé of St. Augustine. While it came

to pass that within four centuries Caesar's *Commentarii* were taken for the work of Suetonius Tranquillus (on which subject see at length the preface of Nipperdey), Orosius' reproduction, on the whole, may be called the most faithful, as it is the last of all those to whom we are wont to assign the term classical in the wider sense. Here and there the effect of Caesar's style upon his own is tangible, *e.g.* VI. 7 (speaking of the Helvetian Orgetorix): "Quo caeteri optimates correpto et ad mortem coacto cohibere tamen semel animatas in praedam plebes nequiverunt" (facile factu, VI. 10). His view of the phalanx of Ariovistus and how the Roman legionaries attacked it agrees on the whole with that of Florus: "Pugna maxime gravis ex phalange Germanorum fuit, quam coacto in unum agmine scutisque supra capita contextis ad irrumpendam Romanorum aciem tute undique praestruxerant. Sed postquam aliqui Romanorum militum, agilitate audaciaque insignes, supra obductam saliere testudinem, scutisque singillatim velut squamis revulsis, *desuper* nudos deprehensorum detectorumque humeros perfoderunt, territi hostes novo mortis periculo terribilem dissolvere compagem." Orosius also read that the flight of the Germans to the Rhine covered "quinquaginta milia passuum." It is noteworthy that in winding up his account, Orosius could not forbear making an allusion to the latest crisis in the affairs of western Europe when the Visigoths under Ataulph and other leaders were pressing upon southern Gaul—as they later settled even in Spain. Gaul personified is made to say, "Ita me Romani inclinaverunt, ut nec ad Gothos surgam." But this was natural, for a province could not fight for that nationality which it had long lost.